1:Marshall E-5 (1952-1953) 1959 FX10 Bushmen FX10
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in the pouches of their karosses along with their babies. This puts a strict limit upon any desire to possess great quantities of property in movables. Furthermore, gift-giving keeps all personal property moving in a current through the region and no one possesses very much more than another. The determining factors in obtaining more than one wife are apt to be the personalities of the individuals and the man's ability to hunt. 'Women love meat', we were told, and like their husbands to be good hunters.

The number of wives a man may have is not regulated by social rules but by his ability to obtain and support them. This limits him usually to one. None of the nine polygynists in the band had more than two. However, we heard of a man named Gao, now dead, who had had four wives all at one time. He had been a fabulous hunter and maker of arrows and was the father of the /Ti/kay who is the husband of two sisters, /Naoka and /Nai, in Band 9.

Only two of the nine pairs of co-wives had traceable consanguineous relationship. The above /Ti/kay's wives were sisters—the only ones—and, in Band 10, Old ≠Gao's younger wife, /Ghia, was the BrDa of his older wife, Bau.

/Kwi, sister, is the term which co-wives apply to each other, unless they have the same name, in which case they term each other */gu!na*. The /Kung, though they do not institutionalize the sororate, say it is a good idea to marry sisters because they are not so likely to be jealous of each other as other women. /Ti/kay's wives, who appeared to live in harmony and affection and to support each other, provided an example of the validity of this opinion.

Marriage to the same man gives co-wives the joking relationship, and they do not observe the sitting or the name avoidance, though they may have avoided each other before marriage.

/Kung co-wives share one scherm and one family fire. The scherm, the little shelter of branches and grass which the women build, a half hemisphere in shape, is only 3 to 4 ft. wide on the open side, about 3 ft. deep at the centre, perhaps 4 to 5 ft. high at the peak. In it and in front of it, beside their one fire, the two wives live, share their man, share the food they gather, share the work of fetching water and wood, nurse each other's babies, and co-operate in whatever degree of harmony their spirits can attain.

Husbands and wives may sleep separately or lie close together, side by side, or feet to feet. The woman holds her infant in her arms. Young children sleep near by bundled together, two or three in one kaross. Girls at about seven or eight go to sleep with a grandmother or a widowed friend or relative. The boys of the band, beginning at the same age, all sleep at a boys' fire.

/Ti/kay (Band 9), husband of the two attractive sisters, sees to it that his wives lie close to him, especially on cold nights, one on each side. Sleeping thus they were like the three stars of Orion which we call the Belt, but which the /Kung say are three zebras, two females with a male between them.

It is under such conditions that the /Kung usually have sexual intercourse—at night, in their sleeping place. They cover themselves with their karosses and are very discreet. The position is to lie on the side, the man at the back of the woman. Men pull the labia of the women before intercourse. The wives of /Ti/kay told me that they took pleasure in intercourse. I asked them if they had orgasms. We had

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considerable difficulty with the interpretation, but I believe they finally understood what I was trying to say. They did, they said, and added that one sleeps very well afterwards.

Co-wives attain varying degrees of harmony. The expression of jealousy, especially loud wrangling, upsets everybody, as all expression of discord does. Women are trained by group approval to mould their conduct to acceptance. But often painful jealousy does beset them, and the tensions are there, though to some extent hidden.

/Aha, wife of a young /Ti/kay in Band 13 at Gam, and still a young woman herself, had with her fierce jealousy driven /Khoa, the pretty young second wife, wailing into the night, back to her family's scherm. /Ti/kay used to sit for hours upon hours singing soft, sad, sweet laments for /Khoa, but she did not return to live with him.

The behaviour of /Naoka and Di/ai, the wives of the medicine man, Gao, in Band 1, was more typical. Both women were approaching middle age, Di/ai somewhat younger than /Naoka. /Naoka had two married daughters and a teen-age son when Gao married Di/ai. The two women obviously disliked each other, but managed to preserve a decent semblance of harmony by self-control, silence, avoiding each other as much as possible in the small space they live in by their fire, and by separating often—going with different groups of relatives and friends to gather wild plant foods, to fetch water, or to visit.

A few men said that the jealousy of co-wives could be so unbearable that they would not marry a second wife, but one said it made him feel good to have two women fighting over him. Most of the men said they wanted more than one wife. They pitied Laurence Marshall because the laws of his land forbade his having several, which they considered him rich enough to afford. One said he would not live where there were such nonsensical rules.

The first wife is considered to have a somewhat more highly esteemed and dominant position. She is supposed to have the right to tell a second wife what to do, and a young second wife should fetch water and wood for the older wife, but I never saw this done.

No property or other material advantage is given a first wife and no important social advantages accrue. For instance, headmanship is inherited by the headman's eldest son by whichever wife he may be borne, and being the mother of a headman does not place a woman above other mothers of sons.

It appeared to me that first wives were often at a disadvantage. Among the people we knew, the husbands favoured their younger, second wives with two exceptions: /Ti/kay of Band 9 favoured his first wife, the elder sister, and Gao, the headman of Band 2, favoured his first wife. Both were good-tempered, intelligent, able women. They appeared to take care of the young girls who were their co-wives, rather than to be served in any way by them. Other older first wives seemed sometimes to be dejected. One told me her husband always took the young second wife with him and, to her deep humiliation, sometimes left her, the first wife, to stay for a time with one or another family in the band, although she said to him, 'Why do you shame me so?'

None of the /Kung women informants expressed enthusiasm for polygyny. Each wanted a husband to herself. They did not expound the social advantage which

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159 585 Band 2. She was /Nai's second cousin (MoFaBrSoDa) and the first cousin once removed of the groom (MoSiDaDa). The attendants were not selected for their precise relationship to the bride. They were the only young kinswomen present in the two bands. The girls sat down and chatted with /Nai for a moment and then stood up and, giggling and chattering, took /Nai by the arms. /Nai drew back. Then Xama pulled /Nai's arms over her shoulders, bent and took /Nai on to her back so that her feet did not touch the ground. Xama carried /Nai in this position to the wedding scherm, laid her down inside, to the left of the opening as one entered, in the dark shadow, and covered her over with the kaross. There /Nai remained. We did not see her again that night.

It is the custom for the parents to take brands from their own fires to light the wedding fire of the bride and groom. Presumably this was done, though I did not see it. When the girls arrived the fire was burning and a young man, a cousin of the groom, was tending it. The two girls sat down by the fire on the women's side.

562 834 352 /Kung men and women must sit on opposite sides of the fire.[1] They believe that if male and female genital organs should touch the same spot on the ground the man's hunting powers would be vitiated and the woman would get a sickness in her genito-urinary tract, not an ordinary, human, communicable disease but a magical one. The woman's side is to the left as one faces the entrance to the scherm, the men's to the right. The fire is always in front of the entrance if the scherm is built, but, more often than not, if the weather is good, or the people are travelling and staying [342] only one night, or the wife is lazy, she hangs the family belongings in a bush and does not build a scherm. Then it is the custom to thrust two upright sticks into the ground to represent the entrance, so that the family may orient itself.

159 585 In the weff of Band 2, about twenty or thirty yards to the west, a group of boys had come to /Gunda to attend him. They were all the young boys of the werf who were approximately his age, two cousins (MoSiSo) and four of the sons of /Gunda's stepfather by his first wife. The boys made a show of catching /Gunda and held him by the arms for a moment, laughing and talking. Then they formed a line with /Gunda following at the end, walked to the wedding fire, and sat down on the men's

[1] This taboo reveals the association which, I 224 833 believe, the /Kung make between the hunting power of men and the male sexual principle. Both must be protected, and sexual activity must be controlled and constrained lest the life-giving and food-producing force of men be weakened or drained away. During the period of a hunt a man must not have sexual intercourse—that is, while the man is looking for game and, after he has shot his little poisoned arrow into the animal, while he is tracking it for miles and waiting and watching for days till it dies of the poison. A hunt usually demands many days and nights of effort and privation.

[783] Too frequent indulgence in sexual intercourse with one's wife, even when no hunt is in progress, is believed to diminish a man's hunting power. Some [841] men believed that once in five nights was best; others thought once in three nights was all right. Men who have the joking relationship constantly play upon the theme of excess, taunting each other: 'You do not know hunting, you know women', 'You cannot leave your wife long enough to hunt.'

The /Kung are less strict about another taboo. A woman is supposed not to touch a man's hunting gear at any time, because this would lessen his power to hunt. But I have often seen women touch assegais and quivers. Indeed it has sometimes been urgently necessary to do so when the children got hold of them, as, for instance, when the three-year-old ≠Gao, agile as a flea, took after us with his father's assegai, infuriated with us for some sudden notion of his own. There is a medicine called *gow gowna*, made from a plant, which may be rubbed on the weapons to purify them if they are touched by women, but I never saw this done and doubted if anyone bothered with it. The effect of a woman's touching the hunting gear is much stronger if she is menstruating. I assume they are more careful then.

[19 cont.]

approximate ages of the members:

	Horde I	Horde II	Horde III	Horde IV
Men	9	7	4	10
Old men	--	--	4	1
Women of child-bearing age	10	12	13	9
Matrons	4	9	7	6
Infants	6	6	7	2
Small children: Boys 1-4 years old	2	3	8	3
Girls 1-4 years old	3	4	6	1
Children: Boys 5-10 years old	4	4	?	?
Girls 5-10 years old	3	2	?	?
Young men	5	--	?	?
Young women	5	3	?	?

The above table thus has reference to 44 women capable of bearing children and to 38 marriages, of which two are polygamous. Four are widows. In these 38 marriages, there are 15 infants, mostly under one year old. To the extent it could be determined, 12 women were pregnant, and about five of them had older infants. It would seem, then, that nursing beyond one year affords no practical protection against a new conception.

The rule among the Nog-au that cohabitation with the mother may be renewed only when the baby is able to sit is well known, but it is not particularly observed.

With these 15 infants there should accordingly be 45 small children from one to four years old; in actual fact, however, there are only 30 small children, which gives an infant mortality rate of 33 per cent. This rate is no higher than is to be expected among primitive tribes in malaria regions; in fact, it is lower than in some native locations, such as East London.

[22 cont.]

114 without compromising oneself. Only old people are suitable
124 informants, since they are no longer eager for renown.

831 In view of the hard life that the people lead, sexuality, naturally, is not excessively developed. Perverse manipulations are evidently unknown, since my informants did not even understand questions on this subject.

● 833 Normal sexual intercourse is usually performed in the bush during the time between the evening meal and the rising
271 of the moon. Long periods of thirst result in almost total im-
147 potence.

157 Despite all the formality, they have an unbridled
578 temperament which frequently expresses itself in violent emotional explosions over trivial affairs, which then may easily lead to serious consequences since the poisoned arrow is always at hand. For example, I was told the following story: A Bushman worked on a farm for quite a long time and, with his belly fat from eating maize, came to visit his thin companions. His brother made fun of him for being so fat, saying that he could not run any more, whereupon the fat one retorted: "Just the same, I'll live longer than you." After this brief exchange of words, the scrawny brother stabbed the fat one. -- A film com-
157 pany once wanted to make a film among the !Kung who are
648 settled behind Keibeb; the film was to be called: "When the First Whites Came into the Land." The chief of this horde had a [237] pair of old German military trousers as an emblem of his office and when he was requested to take them off, he responded with the declaration that he would take off his trousers only if the White did the same, whereupon he received a box on the ears that put him and his companions in such a rage that the film company preferred to depart in order to avoid a catastrophe.

157 That they can also be quick at repartee is shown by the following story which was repeatedly told to me by Europeans: A Bushman had been accused of poaching. The magistrate asked him: "Don't you know that these animals belong to the king (royal game)?" The Bushman answered: "I saw no 'brand' (property mark)."

As a chief or family head, the Bushman is bossy and
[593] unyielding, which is understandable in view of the rigidity of his whole conception of life. The sick Bushmen lie silent and

≠AUIN
NOGAU
NARON

[68 cont.]

1. Birth and Childhood

844 Among the ≠Auin, the husband of a woman in childbed slings the string of his bow around her stomach, but he is not present at the birth itself. The cord is severed with the tip of a reed splinter.

844 Among the Naron and Nogau, the delivery proceeds as it does among the !Kung; an old woman usually provides assistance, however.

845 Twins (Hoi-holi) are not desired; among the Nogau one of them is killed.

553] 844 Among the Nogau, the father gives the child its name. There the child has its umbilical cord severed by means of a sharp quartz splinter. A woman in childbed may not eat blood and head meat. [833] Until the child is able to sit up, the husband may not cohabit with the mother. The latter custom is also found among the Betschuana. 262 Nogau children are not allowed to eat the flesh of the wildcat and of two birds (tsugnussi and /gui). [114] 524 Kaufmann has made some observations concerning children's games; Bleek also provides some data:

[481] 524 Among the ≠Auin little bows and arrows serve as children's toys. The same applies to the Naron and Nagau [sic]. Stilts are known among the Auin and are used by men and boys. Concerning children's games among the Naron, Miss Bleek reports:

The Game of the Big Water Snake

A boy crawls on his stomach to a small pile of sand which is supposed to represent the waterhole. At some distance from it, the children sit in a row, one behind the other, in such a way that each one sits between the legs of the one behind him; he puts his hands on the shoulder of the person in front of him. The biggest child [69] always sits at the front, the smallest at the back. They sing a song that in part is no longer intelligible. (Probably in the children's language.) This big "snake" now moves very slowly around the waterhole, while the water snake from time to time throws sand on it; then the others withdraw. At the end the snake catches one from the row and "eats it." I

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
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thought that he would have to wait at least four years more for her, he would get into such a passion of desire that he would have to send his wife away for a time, lest he forget himself and break one of the most stringent rules. Bushmen believe that it harms a girl terribly to be possessed before she is mature. It might even drive her mad.

Bushmen have no real solution for this problem, as there are no prostitutes and only in a few bands are there promiscuous women. Homosexuality is not permitted either; the young men just have to get used to being tempted constantly but never gratified.

Gai had raised his young wife, and when she reached puberty he had possessed her and she had borne him a son. This was the young man Gai had found at Okwa. Shortly after that his young wife had died and Gai then had married Tsetchwe, whose young fiancé had been taken away by a farmer to work on a farm. Gai and Tsetchwe had borne two children. Only one was still alive; this was Nhwakwe.

When we asked about the residence and about the parents of Gai, an argument arose. Gai lived with Ukwane because his wife wanted to live with her mother, Dasina, and Dasina lived with Ukwane because she and Ukwane were relatives, sharing a common grandparent. Gai himself, said Ukwane, was conceived by a Bushman mother and a Bushman father named Gwena, but Gwena had died while Gai was still in the womb. When that had happened, Gai's mother had gone to Chukudu to marry a Bakalahari man. She and the Bakalahari had then moved to the big rock in the Okwa Omaramba, where Gai was born. This was Ukwane's side of the story.

Gai had been listening, and when Ukwane had finished, Gai raised himself up on his elbow to say that Ukwane was quite mistaken, for the Bakalahari was his real father. An argument dragged on, the old people insisting that Ukwane was

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
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wishes uppermost in their minds. Orphans are eagerly adopted by their aunts or grandparents, and a newborn baby is welcomed as though it were the first baby the werf had ever seen. Sometimes, though, a baby is born that cannot be supported, and if this happens the baby is destroyed. If a woman bears a child that is crippled or badly deformed, she is expected to destroy it, and if the season is very hard and she already has a baby under a year old depending on her milk, she is forced to kill her newborn child. Bushman women can hardly bear this, but they do.

If a woman knows that she must kill her baby, she braces herself for this as best she can, and when the time comes to do it she must act immediately, must take advantage of the moment after birth before the infant has "come to life," that moment between the time the baby is born and the time her love for the baby wells up in her so that the act would be impossible forever after. She must think of the child she has already and act quickly, before she hears her infant's voice, before the baby moves or waves its feet; she must not look at it for long or hold it, but must have a shallow grave ready for it and must put it in at once and cover it and never think of it again. In times of extreme deprivation she can do this, or she can wait to watch both her children die. All this is very hard, and Bushmen, who have no mechanical form of contraception and know no way to cause miscarriage or abortion, prefer to abstain from intercourse for long periods rather than to suffer such pain.

We knew one woman who had been forced to destroy a baby to save an older child, and we knew one woman who had borne a crippled child and had been persuaded to destroy it by her mother, who had been present at the birth. Such things are very rare, though, and this is fortunate.

. . .